

REMARKS

Claims 1, 4, 6, and 12-19 are all the claims pending in the application. Claims 6 and 13-19 have been withdrawn from consideration by the Examiner. Claims 2, 3, 5, and 7-11, have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. **Claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 11 and, therefore, entry of this amendment is respectfully requested as not requiring any new search or any substantial new consideration.** Reconsideration and allowance of all the claims are respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Election / Restriction

The Examiner has withdrawn claims 6 and 13-19 from consideration.

Claim Rejections - 102

- The Examiner rejected claims 1 and 4 under §102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent 2,828,231 to Henry (hereinafter Henry). Applicants have amended claim 1 so as to incorporate the subject matter of claim 11 and, therefore, this rejection is believed to be moot.
- The Examiner rejected claims 1 and 11 under §102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent 4,727,619 to Robbins (hereinafter Robbins). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection because Robbins fails to disclose every element as set forth in the claims.

Robbins discloses to clean the rolling bearing while rotating it. However, the step of cleaning the rolling bearing without rotating the same is not disclosed. As noted by Robbins in col. 4, lines 13-17 (emphasis added), “the bearing will be brushed by the brushes **at the same time** as the fluid will be caused to turbulate by such turning.” On top of this, the order of the process of performing rotation cleaning after non-rotation cleaning, i.e., a two stage cleaning method, is not disclosed. Therefore Claim 1 has novelty over Robbins.

Owing to the order of the process (two stage cleaning method), following technical advantageous can be achieved, for example.

When a large number of hard foreign substances are present in an interior of a bearing and if the bearing is cleaned while rotating the bearing at this stage, there is a fear that a raceway

surfaces of an inner ring and outer ring as well as surfaces of rolling bodies of the bearing can be damaged.

Thus, according to the presently claimed invention, at first, in the non-rotation cleaning step, the cleaning liquid is flowed through the bearing without rotating the same to thereby remove hard dirt particles existing in the interior portion of the bearing. After that, the bearing is cleaned completely while rotating the bearing. This two stage cleaning method can prevent the surfaces of the rolling bodies as well as the raceway surfaces of the inner ring and outer ring of the bearing from being damaged by the hard dirt particles.

For at least any of the above reasons, Robbins fails to anticipate claim 1 (now including the subject matter of claim 11).

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

- The Examiner rejected claim 12 under §103(a) as being unpatentable over Robbins in view of Henry or in view of Applicants Allegedly Admitted Prior Art (hereinafter APA). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection because the references fail to teach or suggest all of the elements as set forth and arranged in the claim.

As noted above, Robbins is deficient. Henry and the APA fail to cure the above-noted deficiencies. Accordingly, for the sake of argument alone, even assuming that one of ordinary skill in the art were motivated to combine Robbins with either Henry or the APA as suggested by the Examiner, any such combination would still fail to teach or suggest all the elements as set forth in claim 12.

Conclusion

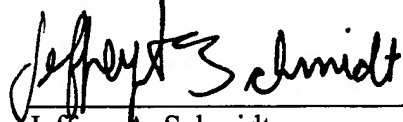
In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Amendment Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
US Appl. 10/748,163

Atty. Docket: Q79225

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey A. Schmidt", is written over a horizontal line.

Jeffrey A. Schmidt
Registration No. 41,574

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

23373

CUSTOMER NUMBER

Date: May 9, 2006